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Abstract , Full Text

Be aware of challenges, telcos advisedJennifer Jacobs. Business Times. Kuala Lumpur: May 31, 1999. pg. 01[» Jump to full text](#) Author(s): Jennifer JacobsPublication title: Business Times. Kuala Lumpur: May 31, 1999. pg. 01

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Article URL: http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:pqd&rft_val_fmt=ori:fmt:kev:mtx:journal&genre=article&rft_id=xri:pqd:did=00000004
Abstract (Article Summary)

This is particularly important as such an expansion raises three risks - management distraction, skills mismatch and a lack of strategic fit, Bain & Co (Asia) Inc vice president Michael Garstka told Business Times in an interview in Singapore recently.

He cited the example of computer company Compaq. "The Compaq senior team clearly lost focus on the core PC business as they moved into the services and enterprise businesses via acquisitions of Digital and Tandem.

The second issue is skills mismatch. Garstka said it will often require a different type of skill and mindset for companies to be successful in adjacent businesses than in their core business.

Full Text (542 words)

Copyright New Straits Times Press, Ltd. May 31, 1999

TELECOMMUNICATIONS companies (telcos) should be fully aware of the challenges in store if they are seeking to take full advantage of the convergence value chain.

This is particularly important as such an expansion raises three risks - management distraction, skills mismatch and a lack of strategic fit, Bain & Co (Asia) Inc vice president Michael Garstka told Business Times in an interview in Singapore recently.

"Management distraction is straight forward. Too many companies drop the ball in their core business when they move into adjacencies," he said.

He cited the example of computer company Compaq. "The Compaq senior team clearly lost focus on the core PC business as they moved into the services and enterprise businesses via acquisitions of Digital and Tandem.

"In the meantime, Dell ate their lunch," he said.

The second issue is skills mismatch. Garstka said it will often require a different type of skill and mindset for

companies to be successful in adjacent businesses than in their core business.

"An example of that is a fixed telephony company trying to move into mobile telephony where on first pass one would think there are common engineering skills, billing skills and sales and marketing skills.

"However, the types of sales and marketing tactics employed, the distribution channels used, the frequency with which pricing needs to be changed and the overall speed of decision making are very different.

"So, even when moving into a business that seems as adjacent as mobile telephony, a company has to think much more carefully about organisational structures, the types of people it puts in place, the skills they need, how they are trained and what kinds of targets are set," he pointed out.

Garstka said even a larger set of challenges applies if telephone companies are trying to enter the Internet Service Provider market.

"In the Internet space, you will not be managing for profits or cash, but for subscriber growth."

Garstka pointed out that the key success factors in getting subscriber take-up lie in the sales and marketing skills as well as design skills which include the attractiveness of user interface and easy entry into a network.

The third issue is strategic fit. "Make sure that you're not moving into businesses where you don't have, or cannot create, a fundamental advantage over your competitors.

"There's tension between non-related diversification and truly moving into adjacent businesses where you have a competitive advantage through either a superior cost solution by participating in both businesses or a superior value proposition letting you share or **bundle products** to customers.

"Companies that don't think in a systematic fashion which adjacent businesses they are moving into, end up buying businesses that are not related to their core competencies and capabilities.

"As a result, they destroy more value than they create," he said.

An example, Garstka said, was US telecommunications giant [AT&T](#)'s buying into computer company [NCR](#), in what it saw as a move towards convergence. "There was a clash of cultures and [NCR](#) underperformed. [NCR](#) lost hundreds of millions of dollars and [AT&T](#) ultimately sold it at a loss.

"This is one of the risks of moving into businesses where there is no customer cost sharing or capability sharing across the businesses," Garstka pointed out. * SEE PAGE p5

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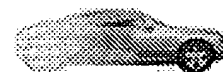
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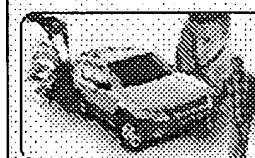
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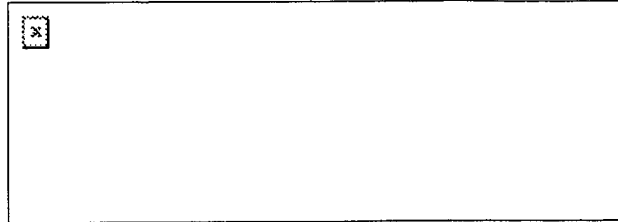


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Dell Announces 'Premier Dell.com'; Premier Pages Service Evolves to Further Improve Online Customer Experience

Business Editors & High-Tech Writers. Business Wire. New York: Sep 8, 2000. pg. 1

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Companies: [Dell Computer Corp](#)(Ticker: [DELL](#), NAICS: [334111](#), Duns:11-431-5195), [Nasdaq Stock Market Inc](#)

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Abstract (Article Summary)

Dell began selling products online at [dell.com](#) in 1996. Premier Dell.com, originally offered as "Premier Pages" in 1997, is the primary Internet portal into Dell for business and institutional customers, providing a single point of contact throughout the hardware procurement and support process. The sites are customized, password-protected, extranets that Dell creates at no charge for these customers. In addition to using Premier Dell.com to buy and track orders, Dell customers can develop product configurations, access purchase history, obtain technical information, offer customized employee purchase programs and access product and account support. Currently, there are more than 50,000 Premier Dell.com sites in 14 languages worldwide.

Full Text (629 words)

Copyright Business Wire Sep 8, 2000

ROUND ROCK, Texas--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Sept. 8, 2000--Dell (Nasdaq:DELL), the world's leading direct computer systems company, today announced enhancements to its Premier Pages Service that make navigation more efficient and expand customization for the more than 50,000 Dell business and institutional customers who use the service to make online purchases.

The service, renamed "Premier Dell.com," includes a new navigation structure, enhanced security features, greater

customization options, and improved software and peripherals ordering capabilities. These new features are fully integrated with the hardware purchasing capability that has been available since the service was introduced three years ago.

"It's an excellent improvement over the existing **Premier Pages Service**," said Tony Saldanha, associate director of information technology at [Procter & Gamble](#), one of the companies to test Premier **Dell.com**. "We can customize our offerings and have complete control of who at P&G has access and can order the systems through Premier **Dell.com**. It has some features that we want to put into our own P&G PC Supply Chain. This is exciting progress."

"The [University of Texas at Austin](#) saves both time and money using Premier **Dell.com**," said Marg Knox, associate director of academic computing and information technology services for the [University of Texas at Austin](#). "Our site is customized to meet our needs, showing recommended system configurations that work well within our network and systems, as well as providing us with quick and accurate quotes. With thousands of buyers on this campus, Premier **Dell.com** simplifies the purchasing process, as we no longer need to get individual quotes from our account team for a purchase."

"Business and institutional customers place a high priority on being able to get into a site quickly, get what they need, and get out," said Mark A. Jensen, vice president and general manager of **Dell's** Relationship E-Business Group. "Our direct relationships with our customers allow for ongoing conversations about how we can make working with **Dell** easier for them. Premier **Dell.com** showcases our commitment to continuous improvement for the best customer experience possible."

Today's launch is for **Dell** customers in the United States, Canada and Latin America. Availability in other countries will follow later in the year.

Dell Online Sales

Dell began selling products online at **dell.com** in 1996. Premier **Dell.com**, originally offered as "**Premier Pages**" in 1997, is the primary Internet portal into **Dell** for business and institutional customers, providing a single point of contact throughout the hardware procurement and support process. The sites are customized, password-protected, extranets that **Dell** creates at no charge for these customers. In addition to using Premier **Dell.com** to buy and track orders, **Dell** customers can develop product configurations, access purchase history, obtain technical information, offer customized employee purchase programs and access product and account support. Currently, there are more than 50,000 Premier **Dell.com** sites in 14 languages worldwide.

Additional information is available on the Premier **Dell.com** demo site at www.dell.com/tourpremier.

About Dell

[Dell](#) Computer Corporation (Nasdaq:**DELL**) is the world's leading direct computer systems company, based on revenues of \$28.5 billion for the past four quarters, and is a premier provider of products and services required for customers to build their Internet infrastructures. **Dell** does more than \$50 million a day in online sales worldwide, about one-half of its total revenue. The company ranks No. 56 on the Fortune 500, No. 154 on the Fortune Global 500 and No. 3 on the Fortune "most admired" lists of companies. **Dell** designs, manufactures and customizes products and services to customer requirements, and offers an extensive selection of software and peripherals. Information on **Dell** and its products can be obtained on the World Wide Web at www.dell.com.

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Dell and webMethods devise b-to-b starter kit

James Niccolai, Ephraim Schwartz. [InfoWorld](#). San Mateo: Dec 4, 2000. Vol. 22, Iss. 49; pg. 12, 1 pgs

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Subjects: [Product introduction](#), [Joint products](#), [Systems integration](#), [Business to business commerce](#)
 Classification Codes: [9190 United States](#), [9120 Product specific](#), [5240 Software & systems](#)
 Locations: [United States](#), [US](#)
 Author(s): [James Niccolai](#), [Ephraim Schwartz](#)
 Article types: News
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 Source Type: Periodical
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Abstract (Article Summary)

Dell last week unwrapped a joint product offering with webMethods designed to allow companies to take a relatively easy first step toward integrating external procurement systems with internal ERP processes. The webMethods software uses XML to create an electronic pipeline that links companies' internal procurement systems directly to **Dell's Premier Pages**.

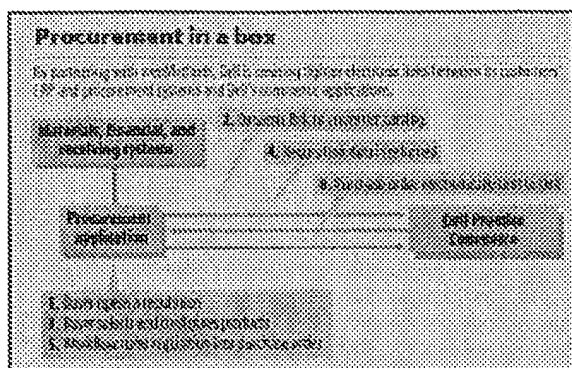
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[Headnote]

Companies pitch integration software/hardware bundle as e-business foundation

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Procurement in a box

DELL LAST WEEK unwrapped a joint product offering with webMethods designed to allow companies to take a relatively easy first step toward integrating external procurement systems with internal ERP (enterprise resource planning) processes.

The offer will initially benefit companies that buy equipment directly from Dell using its **Premier Pages** - customized intranet sites that give ongoing buyers the ability to track and manage their company's system purchases from Dell. The legwork involved in installing a single XML-based procurement system does lay the foundation for quickly connecting to multiple business partners online, officials from both companies said.

The webMethods software uses XML to create an electronic "pipeline" that links companies' internal procurement systems directly to **Dell's Premier Pages**. Users working within the SAP program, for example, will be able to "punch out" to their Dell Premier Page site, place an order, and create a purchase order in one step.

The integration will reduce the costs related to processing purchase orders as well as speed order-to-delivery times,

Chip designer LSI Logic piloted the integrated system from Dell for several months. The company was able to cut the cost of a purchase order with Dell from \$25 apiece to \$5 and cut the time it takes to order a new computer from two weeks to two days, said John Flebut, director of LSI Logic's e-business solutions group, in Austin, Texas.

"It's difficult to do the ERP integration, but if you have the infrastructure, it really isn't as hard as you might think. It is possible," Flebut said.

From design to launch can take as little as three months, according to Terry Klein, vice president of Dell's advanced systems group in Austin.

Round Rock, Texas-based Dell will offer its PowerEdge servers bundled with webMethods' business-to-business application integration software, a move that will allow businesses to link their ERP or procurement systems directly not only with those of Dell but potentially with those of other trading partners as well.

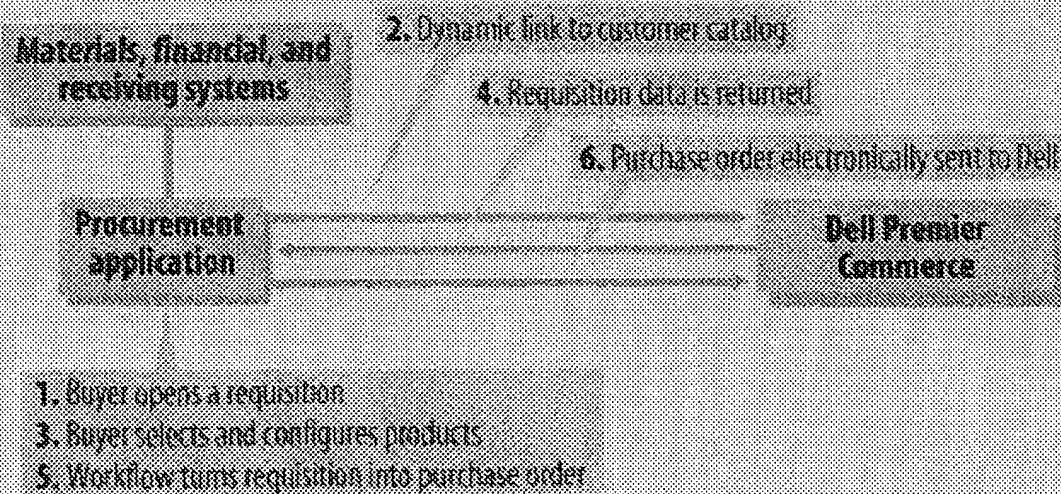
As part of the offer, dubbed the Rapid Trading Partner Enablement bundle, Dell will also sell online procurement applications, Power-- App Web servers, and consulting services, officials said. Prices will start at about \$50,000.

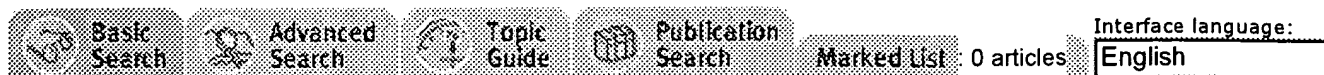
For an additional fee, webMethods will work with Dell customers to extend its b-to-b product so that companies can communicate directly with other suppliers for MRO (maintenance, repair, and operations) or office supply purchases, for example, said Debbie Rosen, vice president of business development at webMethods.

The Dell offering allows them to "put their toes in the water" and see if such an investment pays off, said Tom Fountain, director of b-to-b integration with the Dell Relationship Group. The effort will help Dell sell more of its servers as well as aid Dell in improving its customer "stickiness" by providing a better buying experience, officials said.

Procurement in a box

By partnering with webMethods, Dell is creating tighter electronic links between its customers' ERP and procurement systems and Dell's commerce applications.




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How supply chains will become 'dynamic arteries': MANUFACTURING TO WEB-BASED ORDERS by Nuala Moran: As more manufacturers make-to-order via the web, supply chains will feed through information in response to customer demands, telling the manufacturer if the chain has the ability to produce the goods, at what price, and in what timescale: [Surveys edition]

Moran, Nuala. *Financial Times*. London: Nov 1, 2000. pg. 08

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Abstract (Article Summary)

If the order is the trigger to manufacture, manufacturers need no longer hold stocks of finished goods. Furthermore, tight integration with the rest of the supply chain leads to increased inventory turns, both for manufacturers and their suppliers.

When **Premier Pages** was established a couple of years ago, **Dell** already had fully integrated manufacturing and supply chain processes, something most other manufacturers are still struggling to achieve.

In this scenario, manufacturers will not be sure what they are going to make. The supply chain will become a dynamic artery, feeding through information in response to customer demands, telling the manufacturer if the chain has the ability to produce the goods, at what price, and in what timescale. Copyright Financial Times Limited 2000. All Rights Reserved.

Full Text (903 words)

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Manufacturers who are rushing to establish web-based electronic trading links with customers and suppliers see this as a route to making the supply chain more efficient. But the logic and potential of these links goes beyond cutting procurement costs and aligning supply more closely to demand, to opening the way to manufacturing to web order.

The ability to do this could deliver several benefits: manufacturers can deal directly with their customers, cutting out dealers and distributors, and maybe even their own sales force, and real-time information from customers can be used to drive product improvement and product development.

If the order is the trigger to manufacture, manufacturers need no longer hold stocks of finished goods. Furthermore, tight integration with the rest of the supply chain leads to increased inventory turns, both for manufacturers and their suppliers.

Perhaps most potently, making to web order rather than for stock could bring about the much-vaunted promise of mass customisation. Rather than choosing from a fixed range, customers will be able to specify their requirements.

Making-to-order is not new, of course, says Bob Wild, senior consultant at Compass Management Consulting, "but the difference with web orders ought to be that the order feeds through the entire supply chain."

Making to web order may not be appropriate in every manufacturing sector. In the case of complex goods, such as cars, it would probably mean the customer had to wait longer. In process industries, production is continuous and output cannot be turned up and down in response to customer demand.

"You need to be sure that your market, customers and products fit this model," says Mr Wild. "You have to carry out an e-manufacturing test, to evaluate the right business strategy for this demand-pull model."


Making-to-order is not just a case of accepting the customer's order via a website directly into the manufacturing system. It also requires extremely tight integration with suppliers.


Without this, making-to-order merely changes the place in the supply chain where the stock is held. Manufacturers need to be prepared for every eventuality in the final configuration phase. This requires excellent partnerships with suppliers.


In effect, manufacturers need to move from sharing information with suppliers, a discipline which many have yet to master, to interworking. Production schedules must be synchronised, not just from the manufacturer to one supplier but across the chain. This gives suppliers the power to be proactive, anticipating the need to make deliveries rather than waiting for an order.



Suppliers must be granted access to customer feedback, giving them a way of rating and improving their performance. They also need access to check the progress of other suppliers in the chain, allowing them to track the entire process, and be timely with their inputs.



In effect, making-to-order transforms the supply chain into a demand chain-supplies are no longer optimised to fill the warehouse, but to deliver to the customer.


So much for the theory. The best-known exponent of manufacture to web order remains  **Dell**, the US-based personal computer manufacturer. Since its formation, the company has built its product to customer order, initially concentrating on taking orders by phone, and now transacting a rising volume of business over the internet.


 **Dell** had its roots in the consumer market, but has used the web to break into the corporate sector. Its **Premier Pages** service offers corporate clients the ability to order on secure, customised pages, rather than having to deal with direct sales staff, as was previously seen as the way to service this market.

When **Premier Pages** was established a couple of years ago,  **Dell** already had fully integrated manufacturing and supply chain processes, something most other manufacturers are still struggling to achieve.



Since then,  Dell has taken integration even further. Using software from the e-commerce software specialist webMethods,  Dell has developed B2BDirect, which integrates customers' e-commerce purchasing application with Premier Pages.

Previously, customers had to enter an order on the  Dell website and log it into their own procurement system. Now they enter the order once, and do not have to change internal business rules or applications to deal with  Dell electronically.

 Dell clearly leads the web made-to-order field. Other manufacturers are getting to grips with capturing orders electronically, but few are using the order as the trigger to manufacture the goods.

Another supplier with manufacture to web order capabilities is Foxboro, a US subsidiary of the UK industrial systems conglomerate,  Invensys. In September it launched Measurement-Express.com, a website through which registered customers can order a range of equipment, including pressure and temperature sensors and analytical instruments, delivered within a business day.

A limited range of products is available, but Foxboro says additional products and configurations will be added in the near future.

The examples of  Dell and Foxboro highlight some of the benefits of making to web order. But not even  Dell pushes the model to its limits where, rather than saying what is the product you require, customers will be asked, "What is your need?"

At the moment, most supply chains cannot cope with exceptions, in future that is all they will do.

In this scenario, manufacturers will not be sure what they are going to make. The supply chain will become a dynamic artery, feeding through information in response to customer demands, telling the manufacturer if the chain has the ability to produce the goods, at what price, and in what timescale. Copyright Financial Times Limited 2000. All Rights Reserved.

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